

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 IO-12 PM-09 NSC-10 SS-14 RSC-01

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 DODE-00 L-03 CU-04 NIC-01

PRS-01 RSR-01 /110 W

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R 021250 Z APR 73

FM AMCONSUL CASABLANCA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2110

INFO USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMCONSUL TANGIER

C O N F I D E N T I A L CASABLANCA 0283

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, MO

SUBJECT: NEW POLITICAL SITUATION FOR THE UMT

1. SUMMARY: UNFP/ UMT LEADERS HAVE CONSISTENTLY EXPRESSED FEARS THAT A CHANGE IN MOROCCAN REGIME WOULD RESULT IN REPRESSIVE MILITARY REGIME. SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES OF PORTION RABAT FACTION UNFP AND OF EXILES THEREFORE ARE DISTASTEFUL TO UNFP/ UMT LEADERSHIP, WHICH IS NOT UNHAPPY OVER CURRENT CRACKDOWN ON " EXTREMISTS." UNFP/ UMT NOW HAS NEW OPPORTUNITY DOMINATE LEFT- WING OPPOSITION, BUT IT WOULD HAVE TO RISK GREATER OPPOSITION TO REGIME. IT WILL PROBABLY NOT DO SO, AND A POLITICAL VACUUM WILL OPEN TO ITS LEFT. END SUMMARY.

2. UMT LEADERSHIP, WHILE PUBLICLY CLINGING TO " OPPOSITION" LABEL, HAS SINCE AUGUST 16 CONSISTENTLY EXPRESSED VIEW THAT MOROCCO HAS ONLY TWO OPTIONS - THE KING OR THE ARMY - AND THE KING IS PREFERABLE. THEY ARE ABSOLUTELY CONVINCED THAT THE ONLY COUP THAT COULD SUCCEED WOULD BE MILITARY FROM WHICH A RIGHT- WING MILITARY REGIME WOULD EMERGE TO REPRESS UMT AND POLITICAL LEFT.

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3. SINCE OPEN RIFT IN UNFP LAST SUMMER, UMT FACTION HAD HOPED FOR PARTY RECONCILIATION - ON ITS TERMS. BASIC THOUGH UNSPOKEN TENET WAS DE FACTO SUPPORT OF REGIME, OR AT LEAST ABSTENTION FROM SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES. THIS PRECEPT BASED NOT ONLY ON UMT'S FEAR OF MILITARY TAKEOVER OF MOROCCO, BUT ON DESIRE TO DENY REGIME EXCUSE REPRESS UMT AND POLITICAL LEFT. ALLIANCE OF UNFP EXILES WITH LIBYA IN ATTEMPT OVERTHROW REGIME SEEN AS VIRTUAL TREASON BY BEN SEDDIK, WHO IS OPENLY CONTEMPTUOUS OF QADHAFI.

4. ACCORDINGLY, UNFP/ UMT HAS FEW REGRETS OVER CURRENT DIFFICULTIES OF " RABAT FACTION." RABAT LEADER UNFP OMAR BENJELLOUN, NOW UNDER ARREST, WAS ALWAYS THORN IN BEN SEDDIK'S SIDE. EL YAZGHI (WOUNDED BY PARCEL BOMB IN JANUARY) WAS SEEN AS DANGEROUS RADICAL, AND ONLY BOUABID HELD RESPECT OF BEN SEDDIK AND TITULAR PARTY LEADER ABDALLAH IBRAHIM. WITH UNFP/ RABAT NOW RACKED BY ARRESTS OF NUMEROUS ACTIVISTS IN CASABLANCA AND ELSEWHERE, IT IS NOT YET CLEAR HERE WHETHER GOM HAS DEALT UNFP/ RABAT FATAL BLOW, BUT IT IS SURELY BADLY HURT FOLLOWING SIX MONTHS OF CONSIDERABLE APPEAL TO YOUTHFUL INTELLECTUALS.

5. IN NEW SITUATION UNFP/ UMT MAY RE- EMERGE AS STRONGEST AND MOST DYNAMIC ELEMENT OF POLITICAL OPPOSITION. IBRAHIM AND BEN SEDDIK WILL NOW BE FACED WITH BASIC DILEMMA: WHETHER OR NOT TO ASSUME MORE AGGRESSIVELY OPPOSITIONIST POSTURE IN ORDER WIN OVER THOSE WHO SUPPORTED NOW DISCREDITED RABAT WING OF PARTY. SUCH A STRATEGY WOULD PROVE POPULAR WITH POLITICIZED YOUTH AND LEFT- LEANING INTELLECTUALS AND COULD IN EFFECT RECREATE OLD UNFP COALITION OF UMT AND POLITICAL LEFT. TO DO THIS EFFECTIVELY, HOWEVER, BEN SEDDIK AND IBRAHIM WOULD PROBABLY HAVE TO ABANDON POLICY OF AVOIDING DIRECT CONFRONTATION WITH GOM AND ASSUME RISKS AND DANGERS THAT ACCOMPANY MORE RIGOROUS OPPOSITION TO REGIME. OUR BEST GUESS IS THAT BEN SEDDIK WILL NOT TAKE THIS CHANCE, LEAVING A POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS POLITICAL VACUUM TO HIS LEFT.

NELSON

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*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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